(i v) Finalisation of complaints referred to by Deptt. of Pension and Pensioners Welfare — 90 days.

(v) Submission of status report on complaints received from Cabinet Secretariat — 45 days.

(vi) Representations received from the Members of the Standing Committee of Parliament on Railways:—

(a) where the information is available in Board's Office itself— 10 days.

(b) where the information has to be collected from the Railways — 30 days.

Menace of touts in the Railways

2103. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Touts business continues unabated" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated the 5th June, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the concrete steps taken by the Railway Administration to check the menace of the touts and help the poor passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news item has highlighted the operation of touts in cornering of reserved accommodation in trains originating from Delhi and selling the same at premium.

(c) Regular and surprise checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance departments with the assistance of Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Police staff to check the activities of touts and other anti-social elements in and around the reservation offices. The drives against touts were intensified and during the year 1997-98, 324 touts were apprehended by Northern Railway. Action has been taken against them under the provisions of Railway Act, 1989. Railway staff found involved in or abetting such activities are severely taken up for penal action.

Arrest of Chairman and Members of Railway Recruitment Board

2104. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board has been recently arrested alongwith the other Members of the Board on the charges of taking bribes from candidates seeking jobs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether antecedents of the members of the Board were not verified before appointing them and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIRAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Recently a raid was conducted by the CBI at Jaipur, in which huge amount was recovered from the then Chairman, Member Secretary and other non-official persons who were associated with Interview Committees. The then Chairman, Member Secretary and a non-official person associated with Interview Committees were taken into custody by the CBI, who has registered a case for detailed investigation into the alleged malpractices in recruitment of various posts by Railway Recruitment Board, Ajmer.

(c) Railway Recruitment Board consists of a Chairman and a Member Secretary. As per Recruitment Rules, Chairman and Member Secretary are to be selected by UPSC and before their regular appointments then antecedents are verified. In the past there had been occasions when vacancies of the post of Chairman arose, persons were appointed on adhoc basis as Chairmen and in such cases verification of antecedents was not done. Member Secretaries are appointed on adhoc basis from serving Railway officers and before doing so, vigilance clearance is obtained. In order to protect the interests of the candidates belonging to SC/ST, Minority and OBC communities, non-officials belonging to these communities used to be associated with Interview Committees. Even though they were generally known as non-official members, they were not members of the Railway Recruitment Boards and hence verification of their antecedents was not done.

इलाहाबाद जंक्शन स्टेशन पर सुविधाएं

2105. **श्री चुन्नी लाल चौधरी** : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या इलाहाबाद जंक्शन स्टेशन पर सिविल लाइन साइड में साईकिल स्टैड और स्कूटर स्टैड की व्यवस्था